

Back seat Albion

By IAN WILLARS

W. B. Albion 1, Luton 1

Asa Hartford and Len Cantello sat it out in the stands as their colleagues came off second best again while Luton battled their way to the First Division.

Luton, needing one point, nervously edged through against an Albion side who were far from their best. The troubles involving the transfer-listed Hartford and Cantello have clearly had their effect and the way Albion played mirrored all the reasons why they missed their promotion chances.

Their defence was adequate — though goalkeeper Peter Latchford's concentration was often questionable — while the midfield and attack were never sufficiently dominating to have taken both points.

Luton's promotion, deserved though it might be, only illustrates how easy it could have been for Albion. Luton's manager Harry Haslam was understandably jubilant afterwards and attributed their success to all round team work — both on and off the field.

Barry Butlin, Luton's impressive £50,000 striker from Derby County, was their hero when he scored the all-important seventh minute goal, while the anti-hero in their eyes was Cheshire referee Kevin McNally. He awarded Albion a penalty in the 72nd minute from which Tony Brown scored after Willie Johnston had run into John Faulkner — and he also booked Joe Mayo and Ray Wilson, John Ryan and Faulkner.